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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/492,558	01/27/2000	James R. Gannoe	14635-012610US	1021

7590 06/03/2002

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EXAMINER

PHILOGENE, PEDRO

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3732

DATE MAILED: 06/03/2002

17

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/492,558	Applicant(s) GANNOE ET AL.	
	Examiner Pedro Philogene	Art Unit 3732	

-- Th MAILING DATE of this communication app ars on the cover sh et with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 May 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,8,9,11,13-15,17-19 and 49-54 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 8 and 52-54 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,9,11,13-15,17-19 and 49-51 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>14</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after allowance or after an Office action under *Ex Parte Quayle*, 25 USPQ 74, 453 O.G. 213 (Comm'r Pat. 1935). Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/6/02 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 5, line 2, the term "the first foot" lacks prior antecedent basis.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1,3,9,11,13,14,17-19,49,50,are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Furnish et al (6,132,370).

With respect to claims 1,9, 13, 49, Furbish et al disclose an apparatus (10) for stabilizing an epicardial surface of the heart comprising an arm (50), a foot (32) having a contact surface (46) for engaging the epicardial surface, and a coupling (68) for detachably connecting the foot to the arm. A slot, as best seen in the FIGS, in which a vessel on the heart may be positioned, wherein at least a portion of the bottom surface is convex (FIG.6); and the foot is generally convex when viewed along a central axis defined by the slot; as best seen in FIGS. 5A,6. The length of the first arm being longer than the length of the second arm; as set forth in columns 3 and 4, lines 6- to 67 and lines 1-12 respectively.

With respect to claims 3, 11,14,50 Furbish et al disclose all the limitations; as set forth in columns 5,6, lines 1-67; and as best seen in the FIGS.

With respect to claims 17-19, the method steps, as set forth, would have been inherently carried out in the operation of the device, as set forth above.

Claim 4,5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gilhuly et al. (6,210,323).

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With respect to claims 4,5 Gilhuly et al disclose an apparatus for stabilizing an epicardial surface of the heart comprising an arm (2); and a foot (1) coupled to the arm, the foot having a contact surface (3) for engaging the heart and a slot (4) in which vessel on the heart may be positioned, the slot being aligned with a central axis, the foot having a shape which is asymmetrical relative to the central axis; also have different shapes; as best seen in FIG. 6B.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2,15,51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furnish et al. (6,132,370).

With respect to claim 2,15,51 it is noted that Furnish et al did not teach of a first arm having a length that is 30% longer than the second arm; and a lateral surfaces that taper away within an angle of 2-15 degrees; as claimed by applicant. However, applicant fails to establish the criticality of such percentage and degrees, and the examiner believes that any percentages and degrees could have been used, since the device would have performed equally as well with any given percentages and degrees.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 8,52-54 are allowed.

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Conclusion

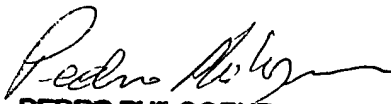
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

5,836,311	11-1998	Borst et al.
6,071,235	6-2000	Furnish et al.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pedro Philogene whose telephone number is (703) 308-2252. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Mancene can be reached on (703) 308-2696. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-3579 for regular communications and (703) 305-3591 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.


PEDRO PHILOGENE
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Pedro Philogene
May 30, 2002